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Slapped the Water

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Eyebrows Made of Crows / Samuel Makidemewabe

If you looked hard enough CROWS were there!
in those eyebrows that lived
on his forehead. Thick crow eyebrows, yes,
and when this boy yawned
those crows went UP
then landed back down over his eyes.

When he began to get tired,
to yawn, the crows WOKE UP MORE.

This happened when he laughed hard
too.

One time joking stories were being told,
one after the other. This boy was laughing,
LAUGHING at each one. The crows
were rising and landing ALL THE TIME
on his forehead. The harder the laughing got,
the higher those crows went!
We got worried they would fly away.
So we put maple-pitch on those eyebrow
crows, to keep their feet stuck
home.

Slapped the Water / Samuel Makidemewabe

This girl knew pond noises
well, beaver tail-slapping and the sound
of trees falling into water
because of beavers. You could find
her footprints going down to the pond
and sometimes see her listening IN THE POND
through a reed.

She must have
heard other water noises that way,
but I didn't ask.

I didn't ask her about that, no,
but once I saw her slap the water
with her hand and laugh.
Later, I looked in her teeth

for bark chips!
Then we both laughed.

I don't think she ever did
any tree chewing though.
I didn't ask her.

Translated by Howard Norman

POETRY / HALPERIN, BELL

Spring Morels / Mark Halperin

The light stripes, flecked with a red
like the cheekplates, longed to fill
the nearest hole. Tendril
and tongue—what swayed was a stalk
and flowerhead, a snakehead
and flowing, a slip of scales, muscle
laying itself over itself in coils.

I stood in myself and kept quiet.
I inched back, making room
as it wound around a stone,
curves sharper, as it brushed
a stick and seemed to announce: this visit
is over, thinner, half memory, lost
in the distance, when I noticed the first,

the last thing its tail had flicked then
left, a spring morel, one
mushroom in a field of mushrooms.

On the mornings I come
to scatter last year's leaves and pick them
I wonder how I missed them in the past,
knowing, in the night light, they can't last.

The Wild Cherry Tree Out Back /
Marvin Bell

The leaves are kites.
What are their goals?